



Setting a Future Course Strategic Plan –

2008

Reviewed and Updated on

January 26, 2011

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# Plan Review Process

## Introduction

North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society (NKLCCS) has been serving and supporting community members for more than 30 years. It does this through professional, skilled and caring staff, committed volunteers, and an uncanny ability to cobble together funding sources to meet a wide array of needs. It links to the broader Kootenay community as well as other local organizations and does its work from centrally located facilities in Kaslo.

The agency has remained flexible and has evolved with community needs, opportunities arising and the changing requirements and policies of its funders.

Board members provide leadership and support to the work, and are connected to the community personally and through many other roles they play (see Appendix 3 for current list of Directors).

**A review of the 2008 Plan was conducted by Board and Management Staff in January 2011. Each aspect of the plan was assessed for relevancy to the present and all recommended actions were measured by the actual accomplishments of the Agency to date. A comprehensive Strategic Planning Process will be initiated in 2012 as per the timeline stated KLCSS Policy Gov 9.**

**Updates to the original Plan were made as required and are identified by “Review Note: “and bold text in this document.**

## Our mission

North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society is a non-profit, multi-service organization.

The Society's mission is to develop and provide services and programs which contribute to a thriving community and enhance the quality of life for North Kootenay Lake residents.

**Review Note: the Mission Statement continues to appropriately reflect the mission of the Agency.**

## 2011 A vision for the future – ‘striving and thriving’

*It's 2011...*

*We are contributing to individual, family and community life in the resilient and thriving North Kootenay Lake community.*

Led by a hard-working, caring Board of Directors and Administrator, our services and supports adapt to the changing demographics, economy and ecology of the area. We are working with other organizations and groups and are influencing community planning and social policy to ensure the most vulnerable people of all ages are recognized and supported appropriately.

*We are building on community strengths and supporting those who need us by using information wisely, promoting well-being for all, advocating for fairness and social justice and by providing needed services and programs.*

Our wide range of counseling services are delivered in a flexible manner, with walk-in visits welcomed. The needs of men and couples are now included in the mix of professional counseling available. Family Place offers a wide array of programs and activities to support children and families to thrive. A successful community garden, seed bank, and well informed food-savvy residents are contributing to real food security for North Kootenay Lake.

*We are making our positive contribution because we have the capacity to do so.*

Our professional and well-supported staff works in secure, appealing facilities. It remains a challenge to generate revenue for all of our work, but the situation has improved as government-contracted services provide adequate funds to cover actual service and administrative costs. A rapidly growing investment fund provides a cushion to allow us to consider new innovative activities. The fund is supported by community members through a monthly donor program, legacy gifts and exciting fundraising events.

Community members have a clear sense of what we contribute to the community, and many of them actively support our work, as volunteers and as donors.

**Review Note: Our assessment is that WE ARE CONTRIBUTING. As an organization we have weathered the storms of the global financial downturn and are making good progress on our vision.**

## Organizational values

*These are our organizational values. They describe the core beliefs underlying our work, and how we intend to behave as we work to achieve our mission.*

*We believe:*

- That individuals, family and community are at the centre of our work.
- That everyone deserves to be treated with respect.  
**Review Note: A Board motion was approved to add the following to the above value: We respect the differences and rights of others. Relationships are based on an understanding of the equal worth of human beings and on respect for individual differences. Staff, board members and volunteers avoid bias show respect for diversity and demonstrate a welcoming attitude to people from all cultures and backgrounds.**
- That building capacity in our clients and community will support well-being and self-sufficiency.
- That respecting the natural environment contributes to a resilient, sustainable community.

*In doing our work, we will:*

- Ensure confidentiality.
- Work collaboratively with other groups and organizations.
- Support the health and well-being of our staff and volunteers.
- Be flexible in adapting to challenges and opportunities as they arise.
- Use our funds wisely and be accountable to our donors and funders.
- Support a strong identity for our agency, and work as a team in achieving our mission.

## Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priorities are the critical few areas to focus on, in order to successfully move forward in achieving the mission. They are described below, followed by recommended action for the next one to three years.

**Review Notes: Each of the priorities was discussed in a joint board and management staff session.**

### Strategic Priority 1

*Ensure the appropriate range of services and supports are provided to individuals, families and the North Kootenay Lake community.*

#### Rationale

North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society has a long tradition of providing an array of services. In recent years, a number of things have led to changes in this menu. New arrangements with government funders and providers have altered the organization significantly, leading to the loss of providing funded home support services for example. Trends and opportunities have also led to change –food security projects for example. Counseling services continue to be part of the core business of the organization, although there are challenges there too, one being the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff.

The raison d’etre of North Kootenay Lake Community Services *is to develop and provide services and programs which contribute to a thriving community and enhance the quality of life for North Kootenay Lake residents.*

To do this well is a juggling act - with multiple funders, recurring staff shortages, a lean administration, an ever-changing government environment and a community in transition.

This priority is aimed at activity that will help the organization keep its eye on the target and adapt as needed to meet needs. It is inter-related to the other priorities.

#### **Recommended action 2008-2011**

- Ensure the counseling needs of the community are met, including adequate services for men, for couples, and for walk-in counseling.

**Review Note:**

**Intake process has improved – We have implemented a process for faster contact between agency and client (initial contact) are tighter; priorities to address needs of men, couples and walk ins remain a challenge due to lack of specified funding. We have established a protocol for assessing the crisis needs of clients on a daily basis**

- Explore the need for services or community supports during the current rapid transition in the community culture. While the agency has some core activities, such as its counseling services, its mission supports it working in new areas, such as the food security program underway. To consider new or expanded roles, the Society must be prepared to assess opportunities; to work collaboratively with other groups, and to be innovative in what its roles might be. In addition to developing programs and services, the organization may choose to advocate for policy change, partner with others, be a provider of information and analysis, or broker change by bringing people together to address their concerns and hopes.

**Review Note:**

**NKLCSS has had strong success in this area. Examples include: Sponsored a huge housing demographic study, Food cupboard, baby supplies, Strong start, mother care (pregnancy outreach program) Partners in Philanthropy**

- Develop a volunteer coordinator position to expand the use of volunteers to meet community needs through the agency.

**Review Note:**

**While this action remains an idealized goal, there is no funding available for this function. However, we have been successful in cultivating volunteers specifically for each program.**

## Strategic Priority 2

*Ensure continued effective leadership within the agency and connected to the community.*

### Rationale

The organization has thrived by adapting to circumstances as it focuses on serving the community. In recent years, simply sustaining existing services has been a challenge at times. For example, home support services were taken back in to the health system (as a policy), resulting in a loss of staffing, operating income and a transition for clients. At the same time, many trends are affecting North Kootenay Lake, from major systemic changes like climate change and development pressures to local phenomena like the growing proportion of seniors and the shifts in the forestry industry (see introduction to report).

The next few years will be a balancing act for the Board of Directors and the Administrator. That balance is between securing a stable sustainable future and responding to new opportunities. It could be simplified by saying, “Make sure the roots are deep, and that the plant grows at the same time.”

Strong leadership means an effective board, a skilled administrator and finding ways to further build links in the community.

### ***Recommended actions 2008-2011***

- Ensure a strong, diverse and committed board is in place to use the Society as a vehicle to meet individual and community needs. Support board development through orientation for new

members and well-used retreats.

**Review Note:**

**We have a full board with committed new and returning members. Orientation has been enhanced by updated materials and information sharing.**

- Develop the needed resources to support and retain an Administrator who has time within her regular role to work on program and service development, growth, collaboration with other groups and community engagement.

**Review Note:**

**We are fortunate to have a skilled ED who works with dedication within the constraint of the part time job.**

- Ensure accountability to the community and to funders, through implementing a successful accreditation process and through building an ongoing monitoring system. Review, learning and evaluation should be built into Board work and regular meeting agendas.

**Review Note:**

**The Agency has stepped up to the plate to meet the accreditation criteria. This has been a valuable process, yet it has taxed the staff and board of our small organization.**

- Each board meeting agenda is structured according to the priorities in the Strategic Plan. This mechanism has helped us keep the plan alive and has incorporated monitoring directly into monthly reporting.

Build and implement an annual plan for getting messages out to the community and for explicitly asking community members for advice and support. Examples of this could include becoming a member of the Chamber of Commerce, building connections with schools, Selkirk College and the Lakeside Teen program.

**Review Notes: The Agency has kept an active and collaborative presence in the community through the following ways:**

- **We joined the Chamber of Commerce**
- **We now have an active and important presence at the local schools with the relocation of the Kaslo Family Centre to JV Humphries School and the opening of the North Lake Family Centre at Jewett School**
- **We partnered with Selkirk College in the Partners in Philanthropy Program a organizational support program for other non-profits.**
- **We recruited a member of the staff at Lakeside Alternate School as a board member. She is able to serve as a direct liaison and assisted with student**

#### **fundraising for the Food Cupboard**

- **We continue to supply counselling support for times of crisis in the community and we actively participate in the grief and trauma team.**
- **We took leadership in offering other professionals Trauma and Affect Regulation Training, and suicide intervention education sessions.**

### Strategic Priority 3

*Ensure adequate facilities for our work - to flourish and to grow.*

#### Rationale

Core services for the Society include a range of counseling services, Family Centre and parenting programs, and the food security project. These and other services are supported by a part time Administrator and small administrative team. While the benefits to the community are provided by staff and some volunteers, there must be suitable facilities to operate from. There is a need for more counseling offices, for stable space for family programming, and there are hopes for expanding the food security program to include things like a community kitchen and seed bank. If opportunities arise that require space, it isn't currently available. The existing building on Avenue "B" requires work just to maintain it well and is suitable for expansion, but limited. There is a move in the community to create a common community services building, but this is not a certainty and may or may not meet this Society's needs.

#### ***Recommended actions 2008-2011***

- Maintain the current office space by making required repairs, creating additional office spaces and making common areas as welcoming and useful as possible. This is required whatever the longer term facility solution may be.

**Review Notes: We have been very successful in addressing the items on the list of needs on time and within budget. There have been major improvements made to the office , improving the environment for clients and employees.**

- Develop a long term plan for facilities that will meet the needs of administration, counseling services, Family Place, food security/community kitchen and other needs. Consider a single site and assess the feasibility of a capital campaign to buy/build.

**Review Notes:**

**A single facility is still a possible vision for the future. We have taken advantage of what was in front of us and we were nimble in the face of hard economic times. The**

**opportunity to relocate the Family Centre to the local school and the ability to take advantage of the kitchen and operational space at the United Church were placed in front of us and the decisions are serving us well, without the need for a capital campaign.**

## Strategic Priority 4

*Attract, retain and support needed employees.*

### Rationale

The organization has skilled, committed and compassionate staff. There is a sense of common purpose and passion for the work. However, there are issues underlying the need to focus on recruitment and retention. Some positions are difficult to fill because they require special qualifications and/or experience and workers are difficult to find. Pay rates and benefits, particularly for counselors, are not competitive, due to funding arrangements. There is uncertainty around funding, both with specific services and the operations of the Society (administration, facilities etc.) Many staff members commute from outside the area, for practical personal reasons, and in some cases, to enhance privacy (working with people in a small community around issues of confidentiality).

### ***Recommended actions 2008-2011***

- Improve the ability to recruit and retain staff by paying people at market value for their work. To do this, negotiate for adequate levels of funding with government agency funders, and develop new sources of funds to support centralized costs (see priority 5).

**Review Notes: Retaining quality staff is ongoing. We live in a remote place that relies upon good road conditions and upkeep since most staff does not live in the Village. Reports are that there will be an upgraded bus service that will in turn support public transportation options for staff.**

- Support staff in their work and job satisfaction through:
  1. annual retreats (in inspiring locations)
  2. team building courses, Pro D days, and staff appreciation events
  3. peer counselling
  4. more individual time to meet/work with the Administrator

#### **Review Notes:**

**Pay rate has improved. We renegotiated service delivery hours with some major funders. Compressed/combined contracts for a number of counsellors to make positions more attractive and enable full time employment.**

**Retreats twice per year have been in inspiring locations and have been good for staff unity. Trauma and Affect Regulation training was hugely successful. Ongoing clinical supervision is available to staff by person of their choice. Peer files review and weekly**

### **meetings with ED.**

- Ensure a thorough orientation for new staff, including an up to date manual and clarifying the organization's values and priorities.

**Review Notes: Recently compiled a staff orientation manual**

## Strategic Priority 5

*Develop ongoing, adequate, and sustainable sources of funds.*

### Rationale

In 2007 the organization received funding for its work from 22 funders, all tied to specific programs. The Administrator and support staff work to solicit funds, maintain funding relationships, manage the required accounting, report to funders, and seek new sources of support. The core agency functions (administrative services, accounting, computer systems, facilities, insurance etc.) are critical yet difficult to pay for, as they are covered through small portions coming from each of the funders. It is also challenging to find money to explore new work or to meet clear community needs.

While it may always be hard work to maintain adequate funding for the Society, it will be very difficult to address the priorities in this plan, or to deepen or expand its community role, without more sustainable funding.

### **Review Notes:**

**We work very hard. Accreditation has drawn from time and resources to dedicate to additional fundraising. However, overall NKLCSS' budget has increased due to program specific funding.**

**Fundraising remains an important and ongoing priority. Core agency funding still eludes us given our rural, small community and the lack of access to United Way type funding that a larger population base has access to.**

### ***Recommended actions 2008-2011***

- Negotiate improved terms for contracts with government funders. Contracts should allow for adequate pay and benefits for employees and for a reasonable amount of support for core agency functions. Developing tactics that consider: clear rationale for adequate funding, using Board members to assist in meetings, lobbying with community support, networking for support from other agencies in the region.

### **Review Notes:**

**Administration reduced hours to increase staff pay, however it is a difficult negotiating climate. The economic downturn has taken a big toll on Social Services. The Board actively advocated for increase in stable funding to acknowledge our remote location and difficulty**

**in recruiting qualified staff with the Treasury Board.**

➤ Create an ongoing fund development program to develop regular streams of funding that are not tied to particular activities, but could be used to sustain the organization and to fund new developments (services, research, evaluation, education, advocacy etc.) Seek skilled advice in order to develop cost-effective, long-term fundraising streams. Examples to consider include:

1. Inform area residents around the Society's work and the need for funds to maintain it and meet emerging needs.
2. Create and promote a monthly donor program (with automatic deductions)
3. Create a legacy fund, with a sensitive yet active appeal for people to plan giving through their estates

**Review Notes: The Agency's Have a Heart fundraising campaign and our presence in the local Saturday Market through the summer months increased awareness. The Donate Now button has been established and is seeing increasing use. A grassroots, community initiated fundraiser for the Food Cupboard grew by word of mouth and Lakeside Learning Centre supported the Christmas Hampers daily on Front St. for 2 weeks**

**We find it delicate to pursue legacy fund development – November and December are good times to push out ads to inform the community of the legacy option.**

4. Establish one or more regular fundraising activities/events that raise significant money while promoting and celebrating the agency (Heart Fence, partner with other organizations to hold a major event, build a community fundraising team...) social entrepreneur income (a kids store for example)

**Review Notes: The Have a Heart fundraising campaign at the Saturday Market was a great success. We are still looking to setting up an annual event.**

**A great option to pursue: LIFT DAY – SAD theme in the mid winter with full spectrum lights – pamper passport pamper faire – gift for Valentine's day**

➤ Seek a source of funds to appoint dedicated staff to initiating these actions.

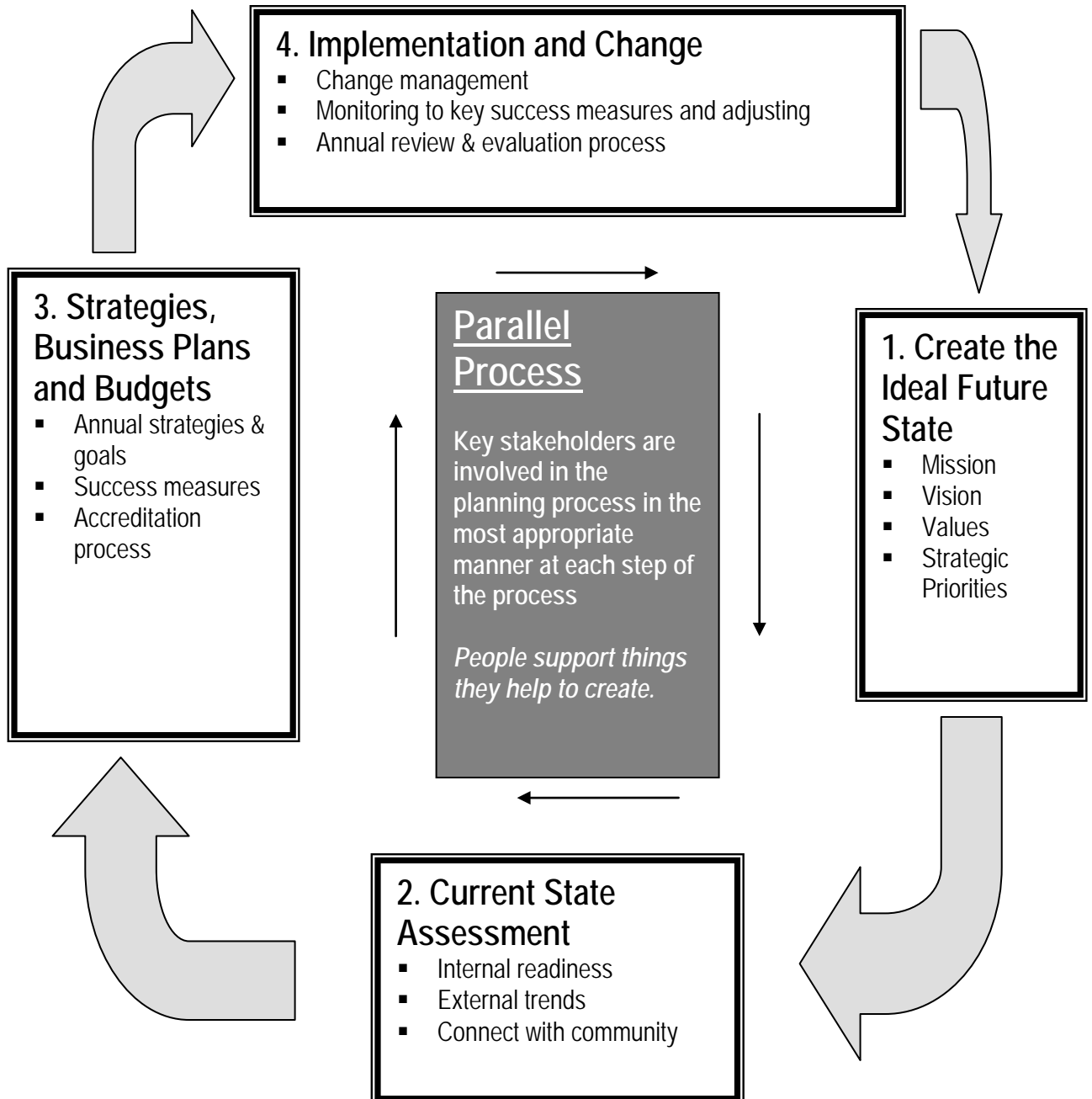
**Review Notes: Nice idea, yet no funding is available for this activity.**

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Strategic Planning Framework

*This is one way to think about the planning cycle for North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society.*

**Review Note: Our Strategic Planning Framework will be driven by our policies.**



## Appendix 2: Agency Services and Supports (2011)

### *Counseling Services*

- Stopping The Violence Counseling
- Children Who Witness Abuse Counseling
- Victim Services
- Aboriginal Victim Services
- Adult Mental Health and Addictions Counseling
- Child/Youth Mental Health Counseling (including Art Therapy)
- Family Support
- Safe Home Network

### *Family Centre and Parenting programs*

- Parent Support
- Parent and Child Time (PACT)
- Guest Speakers
- Parent-Child Mother Goose
- Youth Art and Culture Program
- Nobody's Perfect parenting program
- Strong Start
- Mother Care (Pregnancy Outreach Program)
- Kaslo Early Childhood Coalition

### *Food Security Program*

- Kaslo Food Hub
- North Kootenay Lake Food Cupboard
- Community Root Cellar
- Bulk Buying Club
- Tool Library
- Baby-Supplies Cupboard
- Food Resource Library
- West Kootenay Food Directory
- West Kootenay Farmland Database

### *Other Services*

- Mental Health Outreach
- Self Help - Support to people with mental challenges or acquired brain injuries
- Lifeline personal emergency response buttons
- Partners in Philanthropy community capacity development initiative
- Child/Youth Special Needs program

## Appendix 3: Board of Directors (2011)

Susan Mulkey, Board Chair

Victoria McAllister, Vice Chair

Dan Wyker, Treasurer

Donna Butt, Secretary

Kare Cathro

Marlene Thiessen

Jen Cooksen